

Mailers Companion

June 1997

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Certifying Polywrap

New procedures add convenience

POLYWRAPPING automation flats still requires certification, but now mailers submit fewer pieces for testing and send them to a more local resource—a mailpiece design analyst.

For a given polywrap material to be certified for use on automation flat-size mail, it has to pass tests for seven physical properties. The properties and the standards are stated in the boxes at the end of this article.

The new certification procedures were mentioned in the April *Mailers Companion*. These procedures apply to mailers who want to claim the automa-

tion rates for polywrapped flat-size pieces.

Under the old procedures, mailers had to submit several thousand copies of a piece for testing. The copies were sent to Engineering at USPS Headquarters for a lengthy evaluation process that was only conducted semiannually.

Manufacturers can now use the industry standard American Society for

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John H. Ward
Vice President
Marketing Systems

Michele A. Denny
Manager
Mail Preparation and Standards

Neil Berger
Managing Editor

Patricia A. Bennett
Features Editor

Sheri L. Johnson
Lynn Martin
Technical Editors

Evelyn Stein
Entry Ways Editor

G. Christian Staudt
Design and Production Director

Carl Eichorn
Printing Specialist

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EDITOR
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475 L'ENFANT PLZ SW RM 6800
WASHINGTON DC 20260-2405

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What's "Polywrapping?"

Polywrapping means enclosing mailpieces in plastic—a good way to protect flat-size mail. But not all plastics work well on postal processing equipment. That's one reason why certification is necessary when using automation rates.

Testing and Materials (ASTM) test results to certify that their polywrap film meets the physical requirements.

New Procedures

Under the new procedures, mailers may submit 30 or more copies to a Postal Service mailpiece design analyst (MDA) at any time. The new procedure will save money for both the mailer and the Postal Service as well as save time in producing the test results.

If the mailer is using an already certified film that was listed in *Postal Bulletin* 21930 (10-10-96), the mailer can provide a copy of the manufacturer's letter of authorization from USPS Headquarters. The MDA then checks the sample pieces to make sure that they're produced correctly and that only the authorized plastic film has been used.

If the film is not certified, the mailer provides, with the samples, a copy of the polywrap manufacturer's product data specification sheet. This spec sheet identifies the film that will be used and the test results for the seven physical

properties needed for Postal Service approval, as outlined in the charts on the next page. The MDA then checks that the sheet is complete and the samples are correctly prepared.

Of course, the MDA's approval alone does not guarantee automation rates. The pieces must also meet the usual rate and class standards—like presort, documentation, and barcoding standards—to be eligible for the rates.

Existing Certifications

Any mailer who has already been certified and has been listed in the *Postal Bulletin* remains authorized until March 1998—unless the Postal Service has trouble processing that mailer's mail and suspends the authorization. After March 1998, these mailers will reapply for certification through their local MDA.

Approved films don't require annual recertification. An updated list of approved films will be published later this year.

— Sherl Johnson,
Mail Preparation and Standards

Certification,
though essential, is
only one step
toward authorization
to use automation
rates

Coming to Terms

1. **kinetic coefficient of friction**—a ratio of friction (resistance) versus motion (movement). Tells how easily the plastic slides on a flat sorting machine (FSM) and on plastic. MD means machine direction, or the direction of the plastic's extrusion (like the grain in wood). The plastic moves more readily "with the grain" (MD) than "against the grain" (TD or tangential direction).
2. **haze**—plastic's acceptable cloudiness (visibility level). Tells OCR readability of covered addresses or barcodes.
3. **secant modulus**—plastic's strength and stiffness (bursting point), tested by stretching by 1% at right angles. Shows the plastic's ability to twist and turn in the FSM, measured in pounds per square inch (psi).
4. **tensile strength**—plastic's maximum stress (stretching point) before tearing. Measured in psi for TD and MD film.
5. **density**—plastic's mass or closeness of texture or consistency. Measured in grams per cubic centimeter (g/cc).
6. **nominal gauge**—plastic's minimum thickness for successful performance on an FSM, measured in inches (in). 1/1000 inch (a mil) is the minimum.
7. **static charge**—an electric charge the polywrap accumulates as it moves on the FSM. Too much static can shut down the FSM computer or make other flats cling together. Measured in kilovolts (kV).

Physical Properties of USPS-Approved Polywrap Films

Property	Requirement	Test Method	Comment
1. Kinetic coefficient of friction, MD film on stainless steel with no. 8 (mirror) finish	<0.28	ASTM D1894	Stainless steel finish must be in accordance with ASTM A 480/A 480M.
Film on film	0.20 to 0.40	ASTM D1894	
2. Haze	<70	ASTM D1003	Address labels are an alternative to meeting this requirement.
3. Secant modulus, 1% elongation			
TD, psi	>40,000	ASTM D882	
MD, psi	>50,000	ASTM D882	
4. Tensile strength			
TD, psi	>2,000	ASTM D882	
MD, psi	>3,000	ASTM D882	
5. Density, g/cc	0.900 to 0.950	ASTM D1505	
6. Nominal gauge, in	>0.001	ASTM D374	
7. Static charge, kV	<2.0	ASTM D4470	Antistatic additives can regulate this charge.

Nonletter-Size BRM Test

Participants to pay lower per piece fees in 2-year study

ON June 8, the Postal Service started an experiment with nonletter-size business reply mail categories and is looking for companies to participate.

The Experiment

For the next 2 years, the Postal Service will study the effect of its experimental nonletter-size business reply mail (BRM) categories and fees with a controlled number of BRM mailers.

The nonletter-size BRM pieces will contain nonhazardous products. Companies expected to participate include medical diagnostic and pharmaceutical companies, medical supply houses, film processing companies, market research companies, greeting card companies, and similar mailers.

The Postal Service will review applications and select up to 20 mailers for the experiment. The small number of participants will balance the need to collect sufficient data with the need to conduct a manageable experiment.

Participant selection depends on mail volume, product type and packaging, geographic location, quality control procedures for accounting and documentation, and availability of postal resources.

A prospective participant should be able to be involved in the study for at

For the Record

Date	Action
December 13, 1996	Filing —Postal Service (USPS) files with Postal Rate Commission (PRC) a request under Docket No. MC97-1 for a recommended decision on experimental classification and fees for nonletter-size business reply mail (BRM).
December 24, 1996	Publishing notice —PRC publishes a notice and description of proposals in <i>Federal Register</i> (61 FR 67860-67862).
April 2, 1997	Recommending —PRC issues to USPS Governors its recommended decision. Recommendation follows classification and fees requested by USPS.
May 6, 1997	Approving —Governors approve PRC's recommendation.
May 9, 1997	Announcing —USPS publishes its standards and procedures for participation in experiment in <i>Federal Register</i> (62 FR 25752-25757).
June 8, 1997	Implementing —USPS implements experimental categories and fees.

Nonletter-Size BRM Test—continued from previous page

Coming to Terms

reverse manifesting—a computerized way for a customer to report the return of BRM and its postage and fees. It requires weighing pieces, rating postage and fees, and inputting data into a database. The computer generates a running list in the form of a manifest. All the pieces of a specific volume of BRM are listed. Each piece is identified with a unique number; its weight, postage, fees, and total due are listed; and each page shows cumulative totals.

weight averaging—a manual way for the Postal Service to assess the postage and fees that are due without counting and weighing each piece in a specific volume of BRM. The Postal Service first develops an *average piece weight* factor and an *average piece count* factor through normal verification procedures. After performing several verifications to validate these factors, the Postal Service then applies the factors to the bulk weight of the BRM volume to calculate the postage and fees due before releasing the mail to the customer.

least 1 year and, if selected, begin within a short period of time. Only two methods of counting returned nonletter-size BRM pieces will be used for this experiment: *reverse manifesting* and *weight averaging* (see the sidebar for definitions).

Fees and Charges

As part of the experiment, a participant will be charged the appropriate First-Class Mail (or Priority Mail) postage plus one of these per piece BRM fees:

- for weight averaging, a 3-cent per piece fee
 - for reverse manifesting, a 2-cent per piece fee
- Each participant must also pay these four fees:
- an annual BRM permit fee of \$85
 - an annual BRM advance deposit accounting fee of \$205
 - a one-time set-up/qualification fee of \$1,000 for reverse manifesting or \$3,000 for weight averaging
 - a monthly audit and maintenance fee of \$1,000 for reverse manifesting or \$3,000 for weight averaging

Accounting Alternatives

The standard process of manually counting, weighing, rating, and billing incoming nonletter-size BRM at delivery post offices requires many employees and many workhours. Employees must carefully weigh and rate each piece, then calculate the postage and fees.

This verification and accounting take place during a short period between the arrival of the BRM at the postage due unit and the arrival of the BRM recipient at the post office to pick up the mail. Depending on mail volume, completing the final account of postage due and fees can delay the release and delivery of the mail. Such delays often reduce the recipient's ability to fill customer orders quickly.

Some recipients of large volumes of nonmachinable BRM and local postal officials have developed alternative accounting methods. With such methods, the recipients can receive their incoming mail sooner than mail manually weighed and rated on a piece-by-piece basis by the Postal Service.

In some cases, it also costs less for the Postal Service to determine the postage and fees using these methods. Two alternative accounting procedures—*reverse manifesting* and *weight averaging*—have been used for these purposes.

These procedures generally reduce postal workhours, expedite the accounting, promote earlier delivery of BRM pieces, and increase recipient satisfaction with BRM service.

A review of these two methods has shown that the Postal Service should not

permanently extend them to other BRM recipients until suitable and uniform standards are developed and the associated postal costs are fully documented.

Experimental Accounting

On an experimental basis, the Postal Service plans to use these two alternative accounting procedures for processing large volumes of incoming nonletter-size BRM. Unlike letter-size BRM, this nonmachinable mail cannot be sorted on automated mail processing equipment used for Business Reply Mail Accounting System (BRMAS) participants.

The Postal Service expects that establishing either method for a BRM permit account requires periodic sampling, auditing, and monitoring of the permit holder's operations.

Evaluation of Requests

The Postal Service will consider product type, geographic location, variability in the weight and daily volume of BRM, current accounting and quality control procedures, and availability of postal resources.

If the manager of Classification and Product Development determines that the applicant is suitable for participation, the applicant is told to follow the application procedures for authorization described in DMM G092.

If the applicant is found not suitable, the manager sends the applicant a written notice explaining the reasons for the determination. If appropriate, the manager can ask for additional information to review.

Applying to Participate

Any mailer who wants to participate in the experiment must send in a written request that shows that the mailer:

- Receives or expects to receive nonletter-size BRM consistently. The mailer should receive at one site a yearly average of several hundred thousand nonletter-size BRM pieces eligible for the current \$0.10 per piece fee.
- Has or plans to have a BRM permit and a BRM advance deposit account. The mailer must keep enough funds in the advance deposit account to cover at least 2 days' postage and fees.
- Has or can set up internal quality control procedures for tracking and processing BRM. For reverse manifesting, the mailer has or can set up an approved computerized system.
- Can participate in the experiment for at least 1 year.
- Can begin participating at a mutually agreed-on time after being selected.

The mailer sends the request to:

MANAGER
CLASSIFICATION AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLZ SW RM 6630
WASHINGTON DC 20260-2453

Free copies of *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) G092 and Publication 405, *Guide to Business Reply Mail*, will help in preparing the request. DMM G092—published in *Postal Bulletin* 21946 (5-22-97)—gives the standards for participation. Publication 405 presents background information, sample documentation, and the procedures for reverse manifesting and weight averaging.

Decisions of the manager of Classification and Product Development may be appealed to:

BRM EXPERIMENT REVIEW BOARD
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLZ SW RM 6630
WASHINGTON DC 20260-2453

An appeal must include enough information to help the Review Board reconsider the initial determination. Decisions of the Review Board are final.

— Neil Berger, *Mail Preparation and Standards*

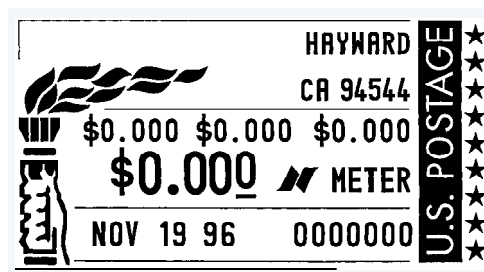
New Meter Indicia

Neopost adds to the official line-up

*This is the new
Neopost indicia.*

THE new Neopost SM26 postage meter and indicia have been approved for customer use since November 19, 1996.

The indicia design for this model differs considerably from the older design for Neopost meters. For example, the mailing date and the city and state of the licensing post office (or alternatively "Mailed From ZIP Code" followed by the mailer's delivery address ZIP Code) appear within the new design rather than within a separate "bull's-eye" postmark to the left side.



The illustration above shows the new Neopost indicia. The other indicia currently approved for commercial (nongovernment) use are produced by these authorized manufacturers:

- Ascom Hasler Mailing Systems, Inc.
- Francotyp-Postalia, Inc.
- Neopost
- Pitney Bowes, Inc.

— Nicholas Stankosky,
Metering Technology Management

Postal Bulletin Table

For the complete amended DMM text for these *Companion* articles, check the *Postal Bulletin* cited in the right column.

<i>Companion Article</i>	<i>Postal Bulletin</i>
Ancillary Service Endorsement Placement	21946 (5-22-97) page 32
Automation Mail Markings	21946 (5-22-97) page 34
Carrier Route Codes on Labels	21946 (5-22-97) page 37
FASTforward SM Window Envelopes	21946 (5-22-97) page 33
New Meter Indicia	21945 (5-8-97) page 10
Nonletter-Size BRM Test	21946 (5-22-97) pages 26–31
Small Flats Test	21946 (5-22-97) pages 35, 36

Carrier Route Codes on Labels

MAILERS printing barcoded labels for direct carrier route trays or sacks have the option of showing one space or no space between the one-letter carrier route code and the required three digits representing the route number.

The standards previously published in *Postal Bulletin* 21937 (1-16-97) that contained changes to label content lines required one space between these two items of information. But *Postal Bulletin* 21946 (5-22-97) made the space optional.

For example, the new content line (Line 2) label information for a tray of automation carrier route First-Class Mail for rural route 22 can be printed in one of two ways:

- “FCM LTRS CR BC R 022”
- “FCM LTRS CR BC R022”

— Lynn Martin,
Mail Preparation and Standards

Route Type	Route Code
carrier route	C
general delivery unit	G
highway contract route	H
post office box section	B
rural route	R

Small Flats Test

BEGINNING July 1, mailers can claim automation rates for flat-size pieces prepared as booklets, catalogs, and magazines when the pieces are at least 5¾ inches long and no more than 9½ inches high.

This height limit is less than the 12-inch limit allowed when the small flats test began in July 1996. This new height will remain part of the test, which has been extended through December 31, 1997.

The extension of the test will give the Postal Service more time to determine whether applying additional standards is feasible.

Factors being tested include the basis weight of the paper and the glossiness of any paper coatings.

Eligibility

The pieces may not be enclosed in polywrap (plastic), and they must be rectangular with a height of no more than 9½ inches when their length is from 5¾ inches up to, but not including, 6 inches.

All the pieces must be part of an automation rate mailing that is 100% barcoded. The barcodes must be either ZIP+4 barcodes (52 bars) or delivery point barcodes (62 bars) and meet the technical specifications for placement and readability.

All the pieces must also meet the automation compatibility standards in DMM C820, including the flat mail machinability tester standards.

— Sherl Johnson,
Mail Preparation and Standards

Automation Mail Markings

How to mark automation rate pieces

MMS* Keyline Codes

Code Rate Category

First-Class Mail

AC	automation carrier route (letters only)
AV	automation 5-digit (letters only)
AT	automation 3-digit (letters only)
AF	automation 3/5-digit (flats only)
AB	automation basic (letters or flats)

Standard Mail (A)

AV	automation 5-digit (letters only)
AT	automation 3-digit (letters only)
AF	automation 3/5-digit (flats only)
AB	automation basic (letters or flats)
EA	Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail automation basic (letters only)

* Manifest Mailing System

FOR Postal Service personnel to identify mail that is authorized for automation rates, the mail has to be clearly marked. Here's what and where to print.

Except for Periodicals, the address side of all automation rate pieces must show two kinds of markings: the basic (class) marking and the automation marking.

Basic Marking

Every automation rate piece, except Periodicals, must show the appropriate basic marking that serves as a class identifier. (For

Periodicals, the Periodicals imprint is described in DMM E211.)

The basic markings are:

- for First-Class Mail: "First-Class," with or without "Presorted";
- for Regular Standard Mail and Regular Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail: "Bulk Rate" (or authorized abbreviation "Blk. Rt."); and
- for Nonprofit Standard Mail and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail: "Nonprofit Organization" (or authorized designations "Nonprofit Org." or "Nonprofit").

The basic marking must be printed in the postage area as part of—or directly below or to the left of—the permit imprint, meter stamp or impression, or pre-canceled stamp.

Automation Marking

Each piece must also show that it is claimed at an automation rate.

For non-carrier route mail, the standard automation marking is "AUTO." Carrier route automation mail is marked "AUTOCR." These markings may be placed only in these positions:

- in the postage area as described above;
- in the address area, one or two lines above the address. In this position, the marking must appear alone except for postal information in an optional endorsement line (OEL) or a carrier route information line;
- if it follows two asterisks, one or two lines above the address in a mailer keyline or in a manifest keyline;
- above the address and below the postage in an MLOCR inkjet-printed date correction/meter drop shipment line; or

Basic Markings

Class	Basic Marking
First-Class Mail	“First-Class” with or without “Presorted”
Regular Standard Mail	“Bulk Rate” or “Blk. Rt.”
Regular Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail	“Bulk Rate” or “Blk. Rt.”
Nonprofit Standard Mail	“Nonprofit Organization” or “Nonprofit Org.” or “Nonprofit”
Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail	“Nonprofit Organization” or “Nonprofit Org.” or “Nonprofit”

Both a class marking and an automation indication are required on all automation rate pieces

Automation Indications

Automation Rate	Processing Category	Options
Non-carrier route First-Class Mail	Letters or flats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “AUTO” ■ Barcode printed in one of two ways* ■ MMS rate code in MMS keyline
Non-carrier route Standard Mail (A)	Letters or flats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “AUTO” ■ Barcode printed in one of two ways* ■ MMS rate code in MMS keyline
Carrier route First-Class Mail	Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “AUTOOCR” ■ MMS rate code in MMS keyline
Carrier route Standard Mail (A)	Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “AUTOOCR” ■ MMS rate code in MMS keyline

* The DPBC (or ZIP+4 barcode for flats) must be part of the address block or be printed on an insert visible through a window in the lower right corner (barcode clear zone)—not printed directly on the envelope in the barcode clear zone. On First-Class Mail, both the “Presorted” and “First-Class” markings must be used.

Automation Mail Markings—continued from previous page

Automation pieces must indicate their automation rate

- to the left of the delivery point barcode, outside the barcode clear zone.

As the “Automation Indications” sidebar on the previous page shows, there are alternatives to using the standard automation markings.

- **MMS keyline**—If the mailing is authorized under a manifest mailing system (MMS) that uses a manifest keyline, the keyline’s two-letter rate category code meets the requirement for an automation rate marking. For example, on a First-Class piece mailed at the automation carrier route rate, the “AC” code can replace the “AUTOCR” marking.
- **Barcodes**—For non-carrier route mailings, the barcode can replace the “AUTO” marking. (This alternative doesn’t apply to the “AUTOCR” marking.) Both letters and flats can

use a delivery point barcode; flats can use a ZIP+4 barcode instead.

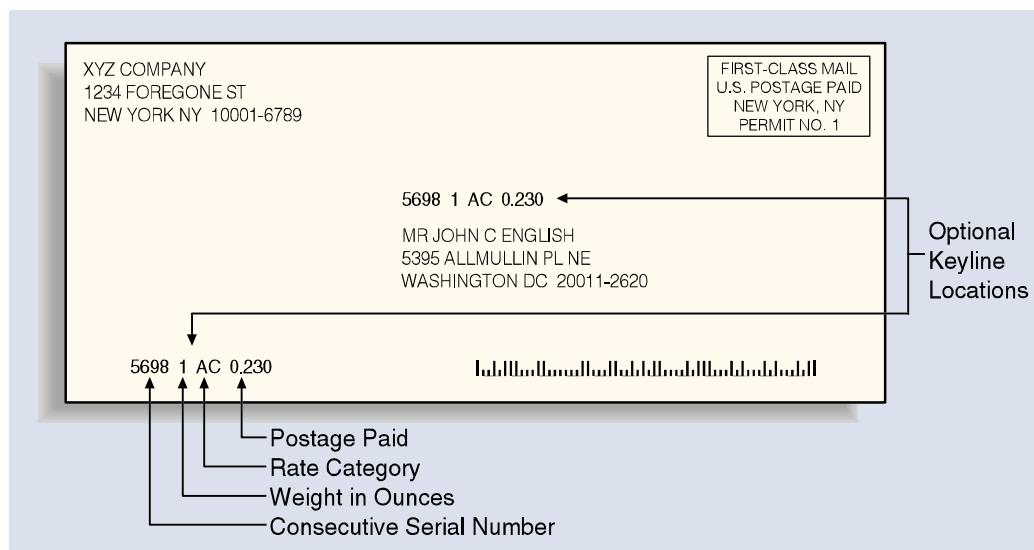
Just remember that, to replace the “AUTO” marking, the barcode must not be printed to look as if it could have been applied by the Postal Service—that is, printed or sprayed on the envelope in the lower right corner. Instead, it must be printed in one of these two ways:

- in the address block, either directly on the envelope or on an insert that shows through an address window
- on an insert that shows through a window in the lower right corner of the envelope (in the barcode clear zone)

First-Class Mail using this alternative must use both the “First-Class” and “Presorted” markings.

— Neil Berger,
Mail Preparation and Standards

Keylines, used with a manifest mailing system, can replace the automation marking.



FASTforwardSM Windows

Special processing requires special preparation

EVEN window envelopes can benefit from MLOCR sorting and FASTforwardSM software. Here's how to make sure that the envelopes work.

Window envelopes sorted on multiline optical character readers (MLOCRs) using FASTforwardSM software must have a barcode clear zone in the lower right corner, free of any printing (including a barcode). Also, the bottom and right edges of windows on the envelopes must not cut into this clear zone.

FASTforward is a new computerized address correction interface installed on MLOCRs. The interface compares names and delivery addresses on mailpieces being sorted by the MLOCRs with the names and addresses of customers who have moved.

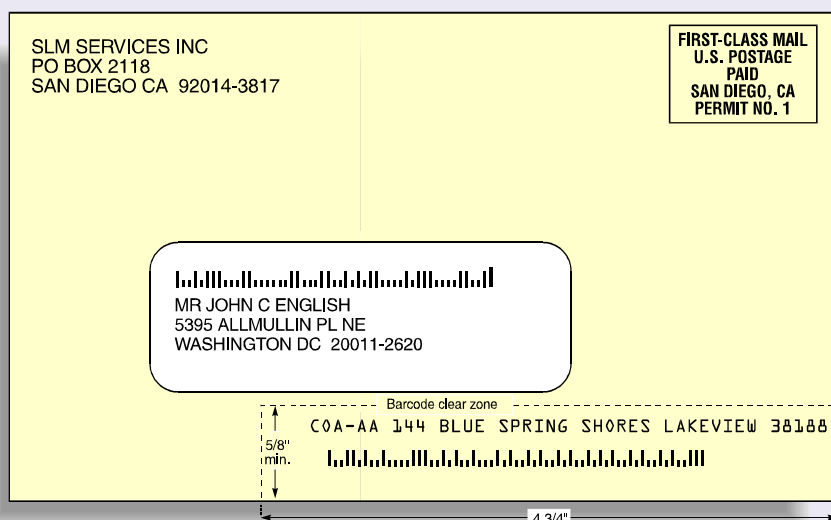
If a match is made indicating a move, a new barcode representing the new

address is printed in the barcode clear zone. And the corresponding text information for the new address is printed either:

- inside the barcode clear zone and above the barcode (the "permanent position"); or
- outside the barcode clear zone and to the left of the barcode (the "transitional position" permitted through December 31, 1997).

For mail processing, this new barcode takes precedence over the old barcode (and old address) in the delivery address block.

— Don Nichols,
National Customer Support Center

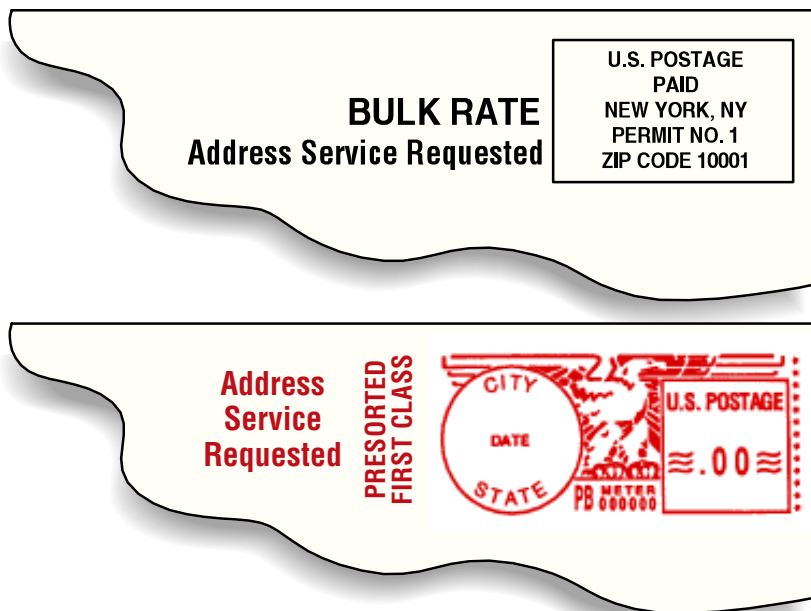


The new address is shown in the permanent position, inside the barcode clear zone.

Endorsement Placement

Ancillary service endorsements claim new territory

Two options to the left of the postage area: below or to the left of any rate marking.



Endorsements must always read in the same direction as the delivery address

MAILERS can now print ancillary service endorsements (like “Address Service Requested”) to the left of the postage area and either *below* or *to the left* of any rate marking. Before May 22, the endorsement could be placed only *below* the rate marking.

This change benefits postage meter users who insert various interchangeable slugs into the meters containing class or rate markings to the left of the postage indicia. (These slugs are set with the type perpendicular to the indicia.)

Ancillary service endorsements can also be placed in these positions:

- directly below the return address (the traditional position)
- directly above the delivery address, optional endorsement line, and keyline
- directly below the postage area and any rate marking

If the endorsement is placed directly below the postage area, multiline optical character reader (MLOC) users who apply the endorsements with inkjet sprayers don’t have to maintain the usual ¼-inch clear space around the endorsement.

The inkjet endorsement must be clear and legible and meet all other physical standards for ancillary service endorsements:

- type size is at least 8 points;
- read direction is the same as the read direction of the delivery address; and
- color contrast with the mailpiece background is reasonable—no brilliant-colored backgrounds or reverse print (that is, white printing on a black background).

— Jane Stefaniak,
Business Mail Acceptance

DMM Revisions

Table summarizes changes leading to DMM 52

THIS table tracks all changes to *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) Issue 51 (January 1, 1997) that will appear in DMM Issue 52 (July 1, 1997). Any change published after *Postal Bulletin* 21946 will not be included in DMM Issue 52.

— Neil Berger, *Mail Preparation and Standards*

DMM 51 Revision Table

<i>Postal Bulletin</i>	<i>Effective</i>	<i>Summary</i>
21934 (12-05-96)	12/5/96	Sexually oriented advertisements —Streamlines customer filing procedures for two programs (SOA and prohibitory orders) that protect against this unwanted mail.
	1/1/97	Periodicals documentation —Delays implementation to July 1 that documentation must be standardized or produced with PAVE-certified software. Later revisions in PB 21940 and 21944.
21935 (12-19-96)	1/1/97	Barcoded tray and sack labels —Delays implementation to July 1 that barcoded container labels must be used for automation rate mailings.
21936 (01-02-97)	1/1/97	Tan Label MXD —Changes from “MS” to “MXD” (for mixed ADCs) on tan pressure-sensitive label affixed to top piece in a package of letters or flats.
21937 (01-16-97)	1/16/97	Labeling lists —Alters lists L004, L102, and L801.
	1/16/97	Merchandise return service —Documents that postage collection standards moved from DMMT 919.7 to new DMM S923.1.3.
	1/16/97	Penalty mail —Documents that detention standards moved from DMMT 137.23 to new DMM E060.5.9.
	7/1/97	Container labels —Revises by exact sortation level all CINs (with corresponding content lines) on tray, sack, and pallet labels. Later revisions in PB 21938 and 21943.
21938 (01-30-97)	1/1/97	Nonprofit Standard Mail —For calendar year 1997, increases maximum value of low-cost items to \$6.93 for products mailable at nonprofit rates.
	1/30/97	Priority Mail labeling —Corrects Line 1 labeling instruction for Priority Mail SCF package sort level from L002, Column B, to L002, Column C.
	7/1/97	Container labels —Corrects content identifier instructions for barcoded sack labels omitted in PB 21397.

DMM 51 Revision Table (continued)

<i>Postal Bulletin</i>	<i>Effective</i>	<i>Summary</i>
21939 (02-13-97)	2/13/97	Ancillary service endorsement placement —Increases from one to four places where endorsements may be printed: below return address, to left of postage area, below postage area, and above address block. Later revisions in PB 21946.
	2/13/97	Container labels —Clarifies and revises tray and sack label specifications such as size, color, and weight.
	3/1/97	Business reply mail —Allows address block barcoding on BRM with window envelopes or address labels.
21940 (02-27-97)	3/21/97	Polywrapped automation rate flats —Allows MDAs rather than Headquarters to certify a mailer's polywrapped sample flats.
	7/1/97	Periodicals documentation —Announces implementation on July 1 that documentation must be standardized or prepared with PAVE-certified software.
21941 (03-13-97)	3/29/97	Unnumbered insured articles —Moves adjudication for claims from St. Louis Accounting Service Center to local post offices.
21942 (03-27-97)	3/27/97	Form 3575-WWW, <i>Change of Address Order</i> —Introduces Internet version.
	3/27/97	Express Mail Corporate Accounts —Ensures proper accounting to reduce uncollectible Express Mail Corporate Account revenue; requires a minimum balance in account equal to average 4 weeks' postage and fees or \$250, whichever is more. Later revisions in PB 21944.
21943 (04-10-97)	4/10/97	Circulars —Clarifies which written additions are allowed on Standard Mail (A).
	4/10/97	Labeling lists —Alters lists L002, L003, L004, L005, L102, L601, L603, L604, L801, and L803.
	4/10/97	Reply mail and special mailing envelopes —Provides standards for FIMs on reply mail and clarifies standards for window envelopes, green diamond borders, and reusable mail-pieces.
	4/10/97	Value added refunds —Clarifies that RCSCs are responsible for mailer authorizations.
	7/1/97	Ancillary service endorsements —Simplifies system for address correction service for UAA mail, with only four endorsements: "Address Service Requested," "Forwarding Service Requested," "Return Service Requested," and "Change Service Requested."
	7/1/97	Container labels —Changes human-readable content line for certain international mail.
	7/1/97	FASTforwardSM —Introduces computerized system developed as another method of meeting move update standard for discount rate First-Class Mail.
	7/1/97	Labeling instructions —Specifies that "MXD" must be added to beginning of destination line (Line 1) on container labels for Standard Mail mixed BMC sorts under L601. Later revisions in PB 21944.
	7/1/97	Optional endorsement lines —Requires appropriate labeling list ZIP Codes for ADC, mixed ADC, AADC, and mixed AADC packages.

DMM 51 Revision Table (continued)

<i>Postal Bulletin</i>	<i>Effective</i>	<i>Summary</i>
21944 (04-24-97)	4/24/97	Additional entry —Clarifies revisions to Periodicals additional entry standards in PB 21925 (8-1-96).
	4/24/97	Express Mail Corporate Accounts —Revises PB 21942 by lowering minimum balance required in account to average 1 week's postage and fees or \$100, whichever is more.
	4/24/97	Registered mail —Clarifies which special services may be used with registered mail.
	7/1/97	Labeling instructions —Revises PB 21943 by clarifying that "MXD" must be added to beginning of labeling information in L601 for Standard Mail mixed BMC sort.
	8/1/97	Periodicals documentation —Delays implementation announced in PB 21940 from July 1 to August 1 that documentation must be standardized or produced with PAVE-certified software.
21945 (05-08-97)	5/8/97	Postage meters —Adds Neopost Model SM26 and new indicia.
21946 (05-22-97)	5/22/97	Ancillary service endorsement placement —Revises PB 21939 by allowing endorsement placement to left of postage area and below or to left of any rate marking; removes standard for ¼-inch clearance for MLOCR inkjet-applied endorsements directly below postage area and any rate marking.
	5/22/97	FASTforwardSM —Clarifies prohibition against windows on envelopes cutting into lower right corner barcode clear zone.
	5/22/97	Markings on automation mail —Clarifies use of "AUTO" and "AUTOOCR."
	6/8/97	Experimental nonletter-size BRM —Gives standards and fees.
	6/8/97	Special services —Revises standards, classification, and certain fees for post office box service, caller service, certified mail, insurance (insured mail and Express Mail), parcel airlift, postal cards (renamed stamped cards), registered mail, return receipt, return receipt for merchandise; eliminates domestic special delivery service.
	7/1/97	Small flats —Allows automation rates for flats for certain pieces 5⅞ inches long if no more than 9½ inches high.
	7/1/97	Tray and sack labels —Allows option of adding one space between carrier route code and three-digit route number on barcoded labels.

Acronyms Used

AADC	automated area distribution center
ADC	area distribution center
BMC	bulk mail center
BRM	business reply mail
CIN	content identifier number (used on tray and sack labels)
DMM	<i>Domestic Mail Manual</i>
DMMT	<i>Domestic Mail Manual Transition Book</i>
FIM	facing identification mark
MDA	mailpiece design analyst
MLOCR	multiline optical character reader
MS	mixed states (abbreviation formerly used on labels)
MXD	mixed (abbreviation used on labels)
OEL	optional endorsement line (on package labels)
PAVE	Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation
PB	<i>Postal Bulletin</i>
RCSC	rates and classification service center
SCF	sectional center facility
SOA	sexually oriented advertisement
UAA	undeliverable-as-addressed (mail)
VAR	value added refund (refund requested because excess postage paid at time of mailing)

Plain Talk

Decorated veterans

MEMORIAL Day is past and Veterans Day is still some months away. So why this “Decorated Veterans” title?

This time, “veterans” doesn’t refer to our nation’s military people. It refers to our business mail entry units, the BMEUs. Every acceptance unit out there is a veteran of numerous mailings. And each one undoubtedly has stories to share.

And “decorated”? Think about that one. As we upgrade our units, do we think about how they should look to our customers? We work on efficiency and customer issues. We try to make the units look professional and attractive. But how about taking the “decorating” one step farther?

We postal employees often serve

in ways that don’t reach the public eye and ear. Why not tell them?

When you visit a doctor or lawyer, you’re impressed and reassured by the number of diplomas on the wall. So, why not a BMEU “Wall of Fame” bulletin board?

Post awards, commendations, and thank-you letters from customers in BMEU lobbies to let people see what kind of work we’re doing. Cover events like the NALC Food Drive, our Bone Marrow Donor program, and the mail delivery that presses on through floods, fires, and blizzards.

And keep the bulletin board neat and current.

We take pride in our performance. Why not let our customers see the results of that hard work? Decorate our BMEU veterans? I know I’d feel proud!

The Last Word

It’s OK to blow your own horn as long as you can dance to the tune.

— Ed Mayhew, New York RCSC

Certified Mail Labels

Designed for automation

APRIL 1995 is an important date for certified mail labels (officially identified as PS Form 3800, *Receipt for Certified Mail (Label)*).

The April 1995 edition is special. It contains an area that fluoresces under long-wave, ultraviolet (black) light for certified mail detectors installed on carrier sequence barcode sorters and delivery barcode sorters. Certified mail that has the new label can be separated from the rest of the mail when it’s sorted on this equipment.

If the edition date of your labels is older than April 1995, discard the labels and get the new ones from your local post office. Postal Service per-

sonnel can order them from a material distribution center (MDC).

Customers who don’t want to use Postal Service labels may print their own if the labels are nearly identical in design and color to the postal labels. The specifications for the labels—including the fluorescent taggant—were published in *Postal Bulletin* 21893 (5-11-95) and are available from mailpiece design analysts at your postal business center.

Since January 6, 1994, customers must use labels rather than rubber stamps with handwritten numbers to mark certified mail. On that date, the Postal Service also discontinued issuing blocks of six-digit numbers to customers using rubber-stamped markings for any special service. These changes were announced in *Postal Bulletin* 21858 (1-6-94).

— Mary Bronson, Business Mail Acceptance



Question and Answer

Mailing products at nonprofit rates

Q: Advertisements for T-shirts and coffee mugs are mostly prohibited in material sent at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates. It is not clear whether the actual items may be mailed at these rates. Can you explain?

A: Your question touches on two issues:

- advertisements for products and services, and
- the mailing of products.

The rules differ for these two issues when mailing at Nonprofit Standard Mail rates.

Ads in Nonprofit Standard Mail have to advertise products that are substantially related to the organization's main purpose—the purpose that qualifies it as an authorized nonprofit organization.

But products can be mailed at these rates even if they don't relate to the organization's purpose at all,

as long as each product fits into one of these three categories:

- Low-cost item (whether bought or made by the organization)—an item costing the authorized nonprofit organization no more than \$6.93. The price maximum is set by the Internal Revenue Service at the beginning of each calendar year.
- Gift or donation (regardless of price)—an item given to the organization without cost.
- Periodical publication—a regularly published item whose advertising content is eligible and whose format meets the general eligibility criteria that apply to publications that are mailed at the Periodicals rates.

— Evelyn Stein, *Business Mail Acceptance*

Customer Support Ruling

Nonstandard Mail Surcharge

PS-200 (C100.4, C600.2), *Updated* October 1996, Supersedes PS-146

IN 1973, the Postal Service proposed to the independent Postal Rate Commission that a nonstandard surcharge be applicable to certain lightweight mail with dimensions exceeding the maximum tolerance of mail processing equipment. Lengthy public hearings were held at which mailers, the public, the Postal Service, and affected industries presented testimony.

In April 1976, the Commission recommended to the Governors of the Postal Service that the provisions for nonstandard mail be established. The Governors of the Postal Service adopted the nonstandard mail provisions in June 1976, but postponed the application of the surcharge for at least 2 years to afford mailers a transitional period in which to adapt to the new standards. When the surcharge was finally implemented

on July 15, 1979, the Postal Service had, for more than 3 years, heavily publicized that a surcharge would be applicable to lightweight nonstandard mail.

The purpose of the nonstandard mail surcharge is twofold. The surcharge compensates the Postal Service for the added cost of handling nonstandard mail, and it encourages customers to use standard-size (machinable) mailpieces.

The current criteria used to determine if a surcharge is applicable is contained in *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) C100.4 for First-Class Mail, and in DMM C600.2 for Standard Mail (A). The applicable surcharge fees are listed in DMM R100.9 and R600.12.

— Anita J. Bizzotto, *Manager, Business Mail Acceptance*

Periodicals Entry Offices

Easier rules, less paperwork for additional entry authorizations

THE change for Periodicals that took effect last August cuts the number of additional entries for plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) mailers.

An important but overlooked change that applies to Periodicals publishers

with additional entry authorizations took effect on August 1, 1996. This change streamlined authorization procedures for publishers and the Postal Service by basing additional entry offices on where copies of a Periodicals publication are *presented* for postal verification rather than where they are *deposited* for mailing.

The distinctions between the old and the new standards can be summarized this way:

- Under the old standard, an additional entry authorization was required at

every post office where the copies of the publication were *deposited* for mailing.

- Under the new standard, an additional entry authorization is required only at the post office(s) where copies of the publication are *presented* for postal verification.

With one exception, the office where the Postal Service performs postal verification is also the office where the publisher pays the Periodicals postage. The exception is that publishers can be authorized to use the Centralized Postage Payment (CPP) System to send the payments to the New York Rates and Classification Service Center (RCSC).

Although this change applies to the additional entry requirements for all Periodicals publications, it actually impacted only publishers using plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS), as follows:

- Under the old standard, a publisher had to open an additional entry for each PVDS destination post office where the publication was deposited for entry rate discounts—that is, destination sectional center facility

Periodicals Rate Eligibility

Every publication mailed at Periodicals rates has these basic characteristics:

- content is consistent from issue to issue
- primary purpose is transmitting information
- primary purpose is not advertising
- schedule of issuance is regular, at least four times a year, with the intent to keep publishing indefinitely
- format is printed sheets

The publisher must maintain a “known office of publication,” which is the office where the publication’s business is transacted during normal business hours. It is also where the Postal Service can review the circulation records on request.

(DSCF) discounts and destination delivery unit (DDU) discounts.

- Under the new standard, a publisher does not have to open an additional entry for each PVDS destination post office.

For a publisher who doesn't use PVDS, an additional entry authorization is required at each post office where copies of the publication are presented for postal verification. In that case, the office where postal verification is performed is the same office where the publication will be accepted and deposited into the mailstream. So

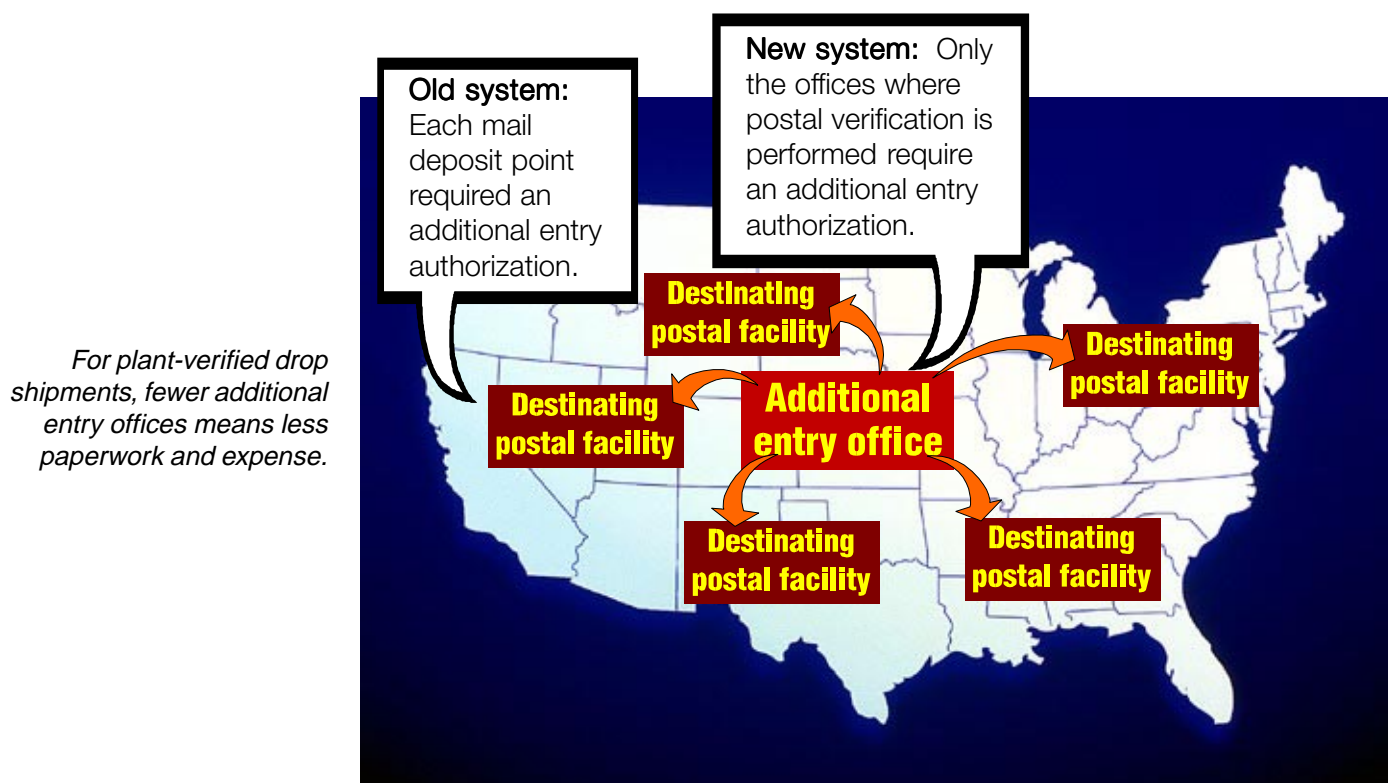
Coming to Terms

- **additional entry office**—an office where a publisher is authorized to present copies of a Periodicals publication for *postal verification* and, usually, for paying postage. In some cases, a publisher is authorized to use the *CPP System* as an alternative way to pay postage for a specific publication.
- **CPP (Centralized Postage Payment) System**—a system that lets a publisher pay a publication's Periodicals postage at the New York Rates and Classification Service Center (RCSC) rather than at each authorized entry office.
- **destination post office**—a postal facility where a *PVDS* mailing is presented with its corresponding Form 8125, *Plant-Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) Verification/Clearance*, for postal acceptance (entry) as mail to qualify for a destination entry discount.
- **Form 3510, Application for Additional Entry, Reentry, and Special Rate Request for Periodicals Publication**—the postal form filed by a Periodicals publisher to request opening, closing, or modifying an *additional entry office*. (Filing this form requires paying the appropriate fee detailed in DMM D230.3.8.)
- **original entry office**—the post office that serves the location of the publisher's known office of publication.
- **postal verification**—the set of procedures used by the Postal Service to check a mailing for proper classification, rate eligibility, preparation, and presort before clearance or acceptance of copies of a Periodicals publication.
- **PVDS (plant-verified drop shipment)**—a system that allows *postal verification* and postage payment at the origin post office for shipments prepared for entry at destination entry discounts. The mailer transports the shipments from the mailer's plant to *destination post offices* for postal acceptance as mail.

even though the wording of the standard changed, the process for non-PVDS publishers did not.

The change greatly lowers administrative costs for PVDS mailers as well as the Postal Service. Publishers no longer need to request additional entry authorizations for each destination post

Periodicals Entry Offices—continued from previous page



office where PVDS is deposited, and the Postal Service doesn't have to process the requests.

Any Periodicals publisher who wants to establish, modify, and/or cancel additional entry authorizations can make the changes by using a single Form 3510, *Application for Additional Entry, Reentry, and Special Rate Request for Periodicals Publication*. Since only one form is needed, the publisher pays only one fee—as long as the effective dates for the actions requested on the form don't span more than 30 days.

— Jane Stefaniak,
Business Mail Acceptance

What Is Periodicals Mail?

Only periodical publications—like newsletters, newspapers, and magazines—are mailable at Periodicals rates. They must meet these sets of standards:

- class—general eligibility standards listed in DMM E211 (see the sidebar on the first page of this article)
- categories—specific qualification standards for one of these five categories of publications:
 - general publications
 - publications of institutions and societies
 - publications of state departments of agriculture
 - requester publications
 - foreign publications
- others—Periodicals mail eligibility and preparation standards for the presort levels, rates, and discounts claimed when they're mailed

Nonprofits and Credit Cards

When cards can be named in Nonprofit Standard Mail

MARKETING SYSTEMS
BUSINESS MAIL ACCEPTANCE



May 15, 1997

MANAGERS, BUSINESS MAIL ENTRY

SUBJECT: Clarification on Credit Card References on Nonprofit Standard Mail

In February 1997 we issued Customer Support Ruling PS-292 (E670.5) clarifying what is a permissible credit card reference under the provisions of the *Domestic Mail Manual*. In discussing what is a permissible reference to a membership benefit, we noted that we did not consider a simple reference to a membership benefit of an organization to be promotional. We further stated the use of brand names such as "Visa" or "Mastercard" is considered promotional and would be prohibited from being mailed at Nonprofit Standard Mail rates. The ruling covered permissible references to membership benefits and did not alter an organization's ability to mention that a donation or payment for a service, etc., may be paid by "Visa" or other credit card.

There have been instances where mail was erroneously determined to be ineligible for Nonprofit Standard Mail rates because a credit card name(s) was mentioned solely as a payment method. For example, "You may pay for your tickets by check, Visa card, or Mastercard." Using the credit card name as a payment method does not preclude eligibility at Nonprofit Standard Mail rates, unless the nonprofit organization received consideration from the credit card company or bank for inclusion of its name. It is also not permissible for an organization to promote its own affinity card. For example, the Stein Benevolent Foundation states in its mailpiece, "You may pay for your tickets by check, Visa card, Mastercard or your Stein Benevolent Foundation (organization name) credit card."

Please distribute this information to post offices in your district. If you have any questions, call Evelyn Stein at (202) 268-5175.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anita J. Bizzotto".

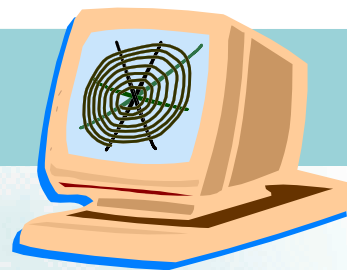
Anita J. Bizzotto
Manager

cc: Managers, Rates and Classification Service Centers

MS:BMA:ESStein:CSR292M

Postal Web Site

Caught up in the Web



THE Postal Service presence on the World Wide Web—now more attractive and informative than ever—is a site to behold!

Many customers like to get postal information through their computers. In response, the Postal Service set up its own Web site in August 1994. Today this site—found at the address <http://www.usps.gov>—ranks as the fifth most widely used government site, pulling in 1.1 million “hits” each week.

On April 17, the site’s look and style were changed to make it easier for people to do business with the Postal

Service and find the information they need. Navigating among the pages is smoother, and the home page is linked to the sections visited most often.

Four new main sections were added as well: “Delivering the Future,” “Unforgettable Letters,” “InkCredible Stories,” and “Send a Message.”

By browsing this popular site, you can get many kinds of useful information. Find out about postal services and

The home page highlights each weekly feature.

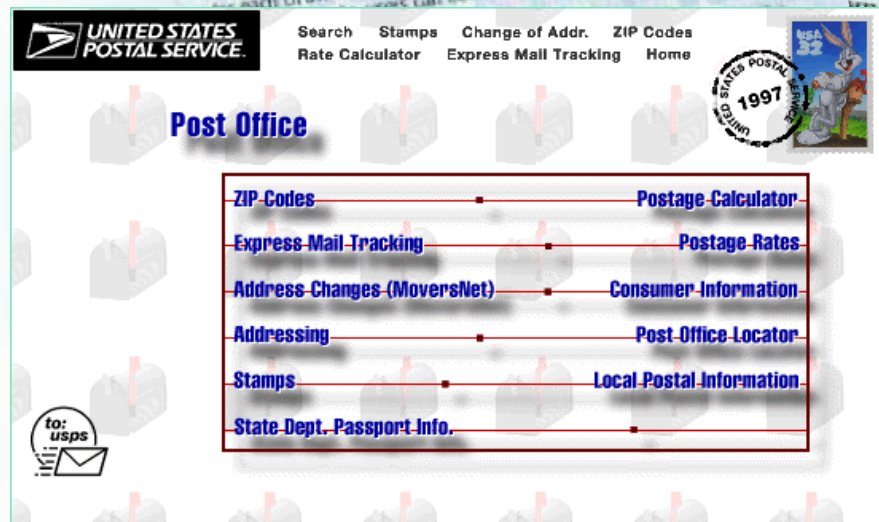
rates. Learn where to go and whom to contact. Look up mailing standards, like size requirements, ZIP Codes, insurance options, new rules in the *Postal Bulletin*, and design instructions in books like Publication 25, *Designing Letter Mail*, which was featured in April's *Companion*.

From time to time, *Mailers Companion* will cover one of the site's regular features. In this issue, we'll whet your appetite with a summary of each feature.

— Patricia Bennett, Mail Preparation and Standards

“This Week’s Features”

See what’s new at the Postal Service, like new developments in Classification Reform.



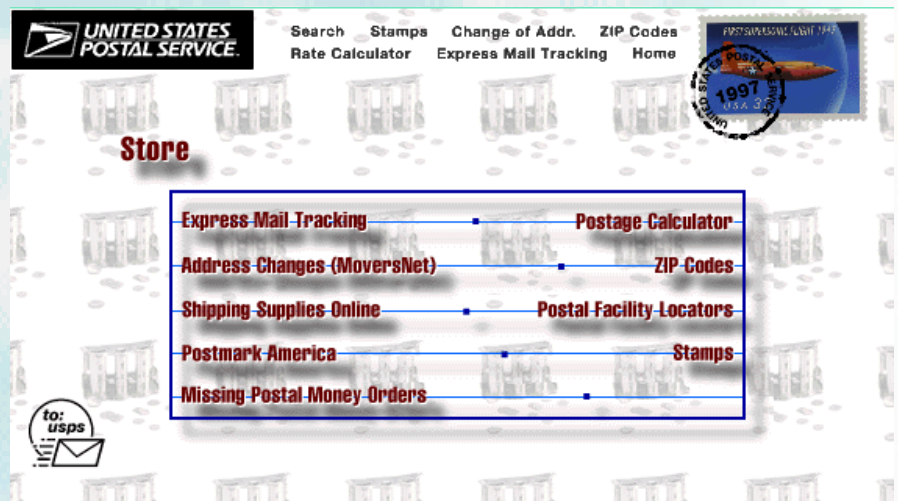
“Post Office”

Stop here for useful consumer information like ZIP+4 codes, addressing tips, new stamp releases, and current postal rates and products.

“Store”

Check out these departments:

- **Express Mail Tracking:** Track your Express Mail package.
- **ZIP Codes:** Look up that unknown ZIP Code.
- **Postage Calculator:** Calculate the postage for a letter, postcard, or package, including special service charges.
- **Address Changes (MoversNet):** Moving? Use the MoversNet change of address form.
- **Shipping Supplies Online:** Order Express Mail and Priority Mail supplies like envelopes and mailing labels.
- **Postal Facility Locators:** Find your local address management office, business mail entry unit, business center, post office, and Postal Inspection Service branch.



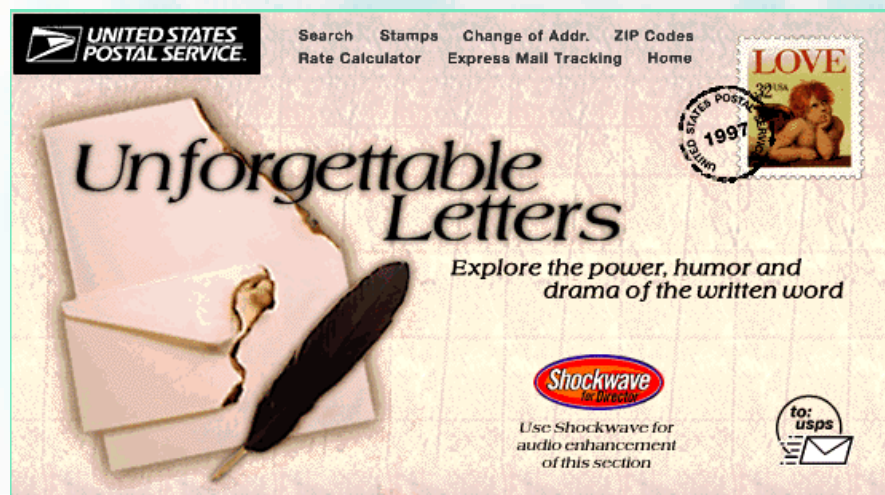
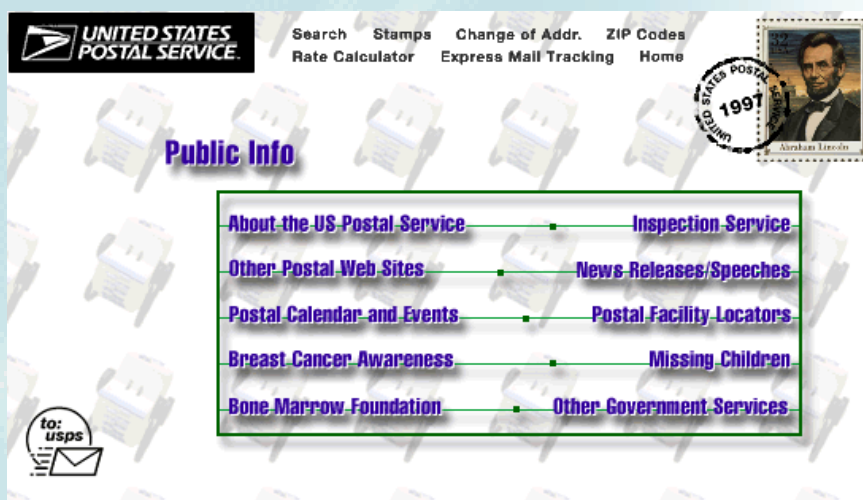


“Business”

Link to business mailing information here—like postal forms and the address of your nearest postal business center. If you sell goods or services to the Postal Service, look here for the latest procurement information. For helpful mailing tips, you’ll find postal publications like *Mailers Companion*, *Postal Bulletin*, and *memo to mailers*.

“Public Info”

Mine a wealth of information about the Postal Service here, including its history, the latest press releases, and other news. There are also various community service links.



“Unforgettable Letters”

Explore the power, humor, and drama of the written word through letters—letters from authors, poets, soldiers on the front lines, and people from every walk of life.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE Search Stamps Change of Addr. ZIP Codes
Rate Calculator Express Mail Tracking Home

ISSUE 1

Delivering The Future

EXTRA! EXTRA! Read All About It! WEEKLY NEWS

- Spring Retail Products Make A Perfect Gift
- A New Way to Get a New Meter
- USPS Develops Five-Year Plan

Soon Mailers Will Have Priority Mail Delivery Confirmation

Tired of hearing, "I never got that package or letter?" The Postal Service is testing a new Delivery Confirmation Service for its Priority Mail service.

USPS to Offer a Variety of Electronic Services

The day is not far off when we will be able to purchase a home or conduct legally binding business negotiations over the Internet—all with the help of the USPS.

USPS Testing a 'Hot Java' Application for Seamless Postage Payment System

Think of the convenience of an automated postage statement residing on your computer. Software testing is being conducted by the USPS for this initiative right now!

Delivering the Mail 'Wee Deliver' Style

From Freeport, New York to Long Beach, California, schools across the country participate in the Post Wee Deliver, launched in 1990.

"Delivering the Future"

Learn about new products and services and get the latest in weekly postal news.

"Send a Message"

This section is for the younger Web surfers. Children can test their writing skills, have fun, and learn in a virtual classroom.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE Search Rate Calculator

InkCredible Stories

Each week a new episode will unfold in these unique and fascinating stories.

A Long Time Ago
Relive the moments of wonder and bewilderment as we follow one immigrant's journey to America in the 1920's.

Circle of Friends
Follow the hijinks and misadventures of Paul Matheson as he blazes a trail across America.

Mardi Gras, Masks, and Mystery
Thomas Desmond's life has been changed forever by a chance encounter with a mystery woman. She leaves her locket as a message of love, or is it a prelude to danger?

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE Search Stamps Change of Addr. ZIP Codes
Rate Calculator Express Mail Tracking Home

Send A Message

Speak Out Write On!
Write a letter to the editor or send a letter to kids who need your help.

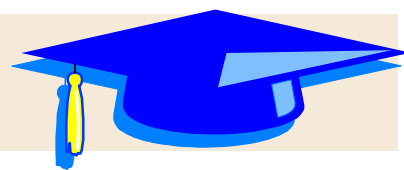
Stamp Stamp
Stamps stamps everywhere. All sorts of fun stuff about stamps.

1st Class Fun
Who ever thought the Post Office could be so fun? Games, quizzes, and more.

"InkCredible Stories"

Read unique and fascinating mail-related stories. This serial fiction attests to the power of mail.

Postal Savvy



This month's topic is registered mail. Try your savvy on these questions.

1. Which other special service may be combined with registered mail?
 - a. collect on delivery (COD)
 - b. restricted delivery
 - c. return receipt
 - d. merchandise return service
 - e. all of the above
2. When can a registration fee be refunded after the Postal Service accepts an article for registry?
 - a. any time before delivery
 - b. any time before dispatch to the receiving post office
 - c. within 1 hour of acceptance
 - d. never
3. Registered mail must show which addresses?
 - a. addressee's delivery address only
 - b. addressee's delivery address and mailing post office's return address
 - c. addressee's delivery address and receiving post office's return address
 - d. addressee's delivery address and sender's return address
4. If the addressee (or addressee's agent) is not available to sign for a registered mail article, the Postal Service holds the article for pickup by the addressee or attempts another delivery if requested by the addressee. How long can the Postal Service hold the unclaimed article before returning it to the sender?
 - a. no more than 15 days
 - b. no more than 30 days
 - c. no more than 60 days
 - d. no more than 45 days
5. For the loss of a registered mail article, which statement is true?
 - a. Only the sender may file the claim for complete loss.
 - b. The claim may be filed 2 years after the mailing date.
 - c. The claim may be filed no sooner than 15 days after the mailing date.
 - d. a and c
 - e. all of the above

— Mary Bronson, *Business Mail Acceptance*

Answers

1. e. COD (see DMM S921.1.8), restricted delivery (S916.1.2), return receipt (S915.1.2), and merchandise return service (other than Priority Mail reshipment) (S923.4.4) can all be used.
2. d. Registration fees are not refundable after the mail is accepted even if the sender withdraws the mail before it's delivered. (See DMM S911.2.5 and S911.3.10.)
3. d. The mail must show the complete names and addresses of both the sender and the addressee. (See DMM S911.3.2.)
4. a. The USPS holds this mail no longer than 15 calendar days (the sender can specify fewer days, but not fewer than 3). (See DMM F030.3.2f.)
5. d. A claim may be filed (see DMM S010.2.1 and S010.2.2) as follows:
 - by the sender only, for the complete loss of a registered article
 - by either the sender or addressee, for damage or missing contents
 - by the merchandise return permit holder only, for a merchandise return service article

Short Takes

Centralized Meter Licensing

June 9 marked the national implementation of the Centralized Meter Licensing System (CMLS). Postage meters are no longer licensed through individual post offices or through the Meter Accounting Tracking System (MATS).

Customers must still get a meter license for each city (5-digit ZIP Code) where metered mail will be deposited.

Licensing begins with Form 3601-A, *Application or Update for a License to Lease and Use Postage Meters*, available from the licensing post office or a meter manufacturer's representative.

Turn in the completed form to one of these:

- the meter manufacturer's representative;
- the post office where metered mail will be entered; or
- the National Customer Support Center.

— *Nicholas Stankosky, Metering Technology Management*

MCI to Link Post Offices Nationwide

On March 26, the Postal Service awarded its largest telecommunications contract to date to MCI Telecommunications Corp. of McLean, VA. The \$100 million contract is for 5 years, with two 3-year options.

MCI will provide managed network service (MNS) for some 34,000 postal facilities nationwide. One of the chief users of the MNS and its Associate Office Infrastructure (AOI) will be the Postal Service's new point of service (POS) ONE retail computers.

These robust computers will phase out the current integrated retail terminals (IRTs) at most post offices for daily customer transactions. By the year 2000, the Postal Service should have about 60,000 POS ONE terminals in place.

— *Neil Berger, Mail Preparation and Standards*

DMM Issue 52 at Press

The Postal Service has delivered *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) Issue 52 to the printer. Copies of this issue will be distributed starting in July.

DMM 52, with a July 1 cover date, incorporates all revisions from *Postal Bulletin* 21934 (12-5-96) through 21946 (5-22-97). This issue also contains updated Quick Service Guides.

Revised areas include special service fees, Periodicals documentation, ancillary service endorsements, barcoded container label specs, content identifier numbers (CINs), and content lines for tray and sack labels. Experimental classifications and fees are added for nonletter-size business reply mail (BRM).

Some terminology is simplified, 400 new terms and cross-references are added to the subject index, and many paragraph headings are revised. Tables and charts are graphically standardized, lists are spaced to be more readable, and graphic illustrations are updated.

— *Neil Berger, Mail Preparation and Standards*

Ask Dr. Goodbarcode

Dear Dr. Goodbarcode:

I have a couple of questions. My word-processing software will print barcodes on envelopes. Should I use barcodes on my personal mail? Would there be any benefit to doing that? Could I get any discounts or anything?

If not, the other question is, am I allowed to do it anyway? The barcoded envelopes just look so cool and official!

Please let me know what you think, because I really value your opinion. I know you're the guru of postal info, especially postal barcoding info. I think it's such a neat coincidence that your name even has the word "barcode" in it!

Yours truly,
I.M. Eager, Beaverton CO



Dear I.:

By all means, barcode away! There's a definite benefit (though the benefit is not a discount, since you mail single pieces).

Your barcoded letter will probably get read (just the outside of it, of course) by a barcode sorting machine (also known as a BCS, of course). When mail is sorted on these machines, many of the normal processing steps get bypassed. Using barcodes might sometimes save you a whole day in delivery time.

Which is good, because then you can say, "Barcodes saved the day!"

And even without the benefit of possible speed, you're still allowed to barcode personal mail. Just make sure each barcode is

correct and in one of three places: lower right corner, at the top of the address block, or at the bottom of the block (the last two would be easiest for you). Get those barcodes straight and your worries will vanish like the morning mist on a sunny day in June.

By the way, it's funny that you should mention my being a guru. I was thinking about my job title and its related acronym. Maybe you could help me come up with something appropriate.

How do you like "Resident Expert on All Things Postal (REATP)"? Or how about "Vice President in Charge of Answering Questions (VPAQ)"?

I know what you're thinking: those titles are way too long. I would have to write all my letters on legal-size paper just to fit the job title.

But I think "Know It All (KIA)" is too general, and "Postal Information Guru (PIG)" is somehow awkward.

I'm really in a dither over this issue, so if you could send me some suggestions, I would be externally grateful.

—Sincerely, Dr. Goodbarcode

Any questions?

Ask Dr. Goodbarcode at:

DR GOODBARCODE
MAILERS COMPANION
US POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLZ SW RM 6800
WASHINGTON DC 20260-2405

Reader Comments



Endorsements

A nonprofit mailer currently uses the "Address Correction Requested" endorsement on Nonprofit Standard Mail. After July 1, if the mailer uses this endorsement on a 1-ounce mailpiece, an undeliverable-as-addressed mailpiece will come back with the new address or reason for nondelivery at a cost of 32 cents.

If the mailer makes the recommended change and uses "Change Service Requested," the mailer will get the new address or reason for nondelivery and pay 50 cents.

After December 31, the current endorsement becomes invalid but the mailer will continue to get the mailpiece back at a cost of 32 cents.

What is the incentive to use the correct endorsement?

—Michelle Koman,
Account Representative,
Erie, PA

In this case, the mailer should use the "Return Service Requested" endorsement to get the address change at the 32-cent rate. If the mailpiece weighs more than 1 ounce, the address correction notice "Change

Service Requested" at a cost of 50 cents may be more tempting.

The mailer must base his or her decision on specific needs, whether cost or return of the piece.

—Rocky Matthews,
Address Management

Mailers' or Mailer's?

Shouldn't the name of your publication be changed to *Mailer's Companion* or *Mailers' Companion* with the apostrophe included—the first being for a single mailer and the second option for two or more mailers?

—David B. Popkin,
Englewood, NJ

"Mailers" has no apostrophe because we chose to make this noun attributive rather than possessive. The plural noun "mailers" is used as an adjective to describe the noun "companion."

Other examples of that kind of construction are *postage meter*, *mail carrier*, and *Periodicals* rate. This usage, especially in titles, is documented in the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Think of us as "the companion of mailers" in the same way that "Veterans

Day" (which also has no apostrophe) is "the day of veterans."

—Patricia Bennett, Mail
Preparation and Standards

Standard or First-Class?

Regarding your response to the mailer's query on page 24 of the April 1997 issue of *Mailers Companion*, I have a question.

For an article weighing up to 11 ounces, why would any mailer choose to send it by Standard Mail (A) rather than sending it by First-Class Mail? The postage rate is the same and the service obviously is far better for First-Class.

—David B. Popkin,
Englewood, NJ

Our response listed the rates that could be subject to a nonstandard surcharge. It wasn't meant to recommend a particular class of mail.

Single-Piece Standard Mail is used less often than First-Class Mail because:

- Some material—like correspondence and invoices—can't be sent as Standard Mail (A). Such matter must be sent as First-Class Mail.

Choose your
endorsement
according to
your needs

Reader Comments—continued from previous page

Staples have
restricted uses in
mail...but should they
be allowed at all?

- Service standards give First-Class Mail processing priority over Single-Piece Standard Mail.
- Under the current system of ancillary service endorsements, First-Class Mail is usually forwarded or returned (depending on the endorsement) at no additional charge or fee. For Single-Piece Standard Mail, on the other hand, there are other costs—either a return postage charge or an address correction fee, depending on the endorsement used.

—Patricia Bennett, *Mail Preparation and Standards*

Stapled Mail

In current postal regulations,

staples are not allowed to be used as a closure on automated mail but can be used on nonautomated mail. Since we are trying to get more mail on our automated systems, why don't we prohibit the use of staples on all mail?

—Gregory L. Burr,
*Distribution Clerk,
Madison, WI*

First, we must note that there is a difference between using staples for sealing (closing) and using them for binding.

Although *sealing* automation mail with staples is not allowed, *binding* the edge (spine) of booklet-type automation pieces is allowed. The staples must be parallel to the bound edge, seat tightly

and securely, and have no dangerous protrusions.

As for nonautomation mail, we do not *recommend* using staples, but it is allowed because this mail isn't processed on high-speed machines. Staple safety is less of an issue for this mail.

Since many smaller mailers pay the higher nonautomation rates anyway, they find that using staples to close or secure their mailpieces is the most economical system. And we need to balance the benefits of automation with the needs of mailers.

—Jane Stefaniak,
Business Mail Preparation

MAILERS COMPANION
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US POSTAL SERVICE
6060 PRIMACY PKWY STE 201
MEMPHIS TN 38188-0001

Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed
Address Correction Requested

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